ALDOT Leadership Academy

Facilitator Guide

Acknowledgements

The ALDOT Leadership Academy Committee would like to thank the Administration of our Department for the support and encouragement as we developed the program. Their belief in our work and involvement as program facilitators will assist in the success of the ALDOT Leadership Academy.

Additionally, the ALDOT owes a debt of gratitude to the Institute of Transportation Engineers Southern District (SDITE) for allowing their Leadership Program to be used as the basis for development of this program. Without the hard work of the SDITE members, this Academy would not have been envisioned.

Finally, the ALDOT Leadership Academy Committee appreciates the support of the Training Bureau and will use additional and more specific content from current Training Bureau programs as part of the Academy in the future.

Facilitator Guide for the ALDOT Leadership Academy

Purpose

This document provides guidelines for volunteer facilitators including their specified modules of the Leadership Academy. The Guide offers suggestions to facilitators about the preparations and deliver of the module for which they were selected. Participants will look to facilitators as role models as they guide participants to become highly effective leaders. Because of this effort and inspiration by facilitators, they are changing the face of ALDOT and placing current employees and supervisors in a position to change the future of the Alabama Department of Transportation.

There are two components to this Facilitator Guide.
1. The first component provides a general overview of the leadership program to guide the planning of facilitators' module of instruction.
2. The second component provides general information for facilitators in understanding the goals for the Leadership Academy and techniques to engage participants during their module of instruction.

This Facilitator Guide should be used in conjunction with information provided in the Briefing for Facilitators.

Part 1: General Overview

Background

The ALDOT Leadership Academy was developed in response to the positive feedback received after employees attended the ITE Leadership Program. The Leadership Academy seeks to motivate participants to begin a sustained journey on the path of leadership development, and to seek and acquire leadership attitudes, skills and tools that best fit each participant's personal outlook and job situation. The ALDOT Leadership Academy was developed around two major components:

(1) character and
(2) key skill sets.

The ALDOT Leadership Academy may differ from external engineering training programs or commercial leadership programs, as it calls for developers, facilitators, leaders and participants to maintain the high goal of positively changing our Department one person at a time through enhanced leadership at all levels.

Format of Materials

The Leadership Academy has a notebook with 17 modules. As mentioned the first modules deal with the internal qualities of a leader, with character being the primary focus. The second component deals with necessary skill sets that distinguish leaders from routine managers and supervisors. Each module consists of three or four parts depending on the topic.

1. *Read Ahead*
   This part is the narrative or assigned reading that participants study prior to the session. It may range from four to twelve pages. The Read Ahead will contain more information than the actual PowerPoint that will be used in the session by facilitators.

2. *Handout*
   This part of the module is a handout that participants use during the presentation. They complete the content based on the facilitators' input. The Handout is based solely on the PowerPoint information. There is space for the individual or group to write answers to discussion questions and exercises.

3. *PowerPoint*
   This part of the module is the exact slides that are in the facilitators' instruction material. It includes the module learning objectives, a transition slide that links the prior module content to the module being conducted. Also, the last slide, called a Final Thought, not only indicates the end of the module presentation but also brings the content back to a general idea or concept.

4. *Toolbox*
   The Toolbox will only accompany some modules based on the topic. If included, the Toolbox contains additional information that is not covered on the Read Ahead or PowerPoint or expanded resources related to the module topic but may not be discussed during the presentation.

Unique Nature of the Academy

There are two unique hallmarks of the Leadership Academy, 1) the role of volunteers and 2) the emphasis on character.

The first hallmark involves volunteers. The program was created by a small group of senior-level volunteers in response to an expressed desire for leadership training modeled after the ITE Leadership Program. It was designed for volunteer senior leaders within ALDOT to work with small groups of ALDOT employees and relatively new supervisors. The result of the Academy, is to challenge and assist participants in to develop attitudes and starter-level skill sets that empower enhanced leadership. Academy participants are asked to practice their new skill sets by mentoring their employees and assisting as facilitators in future Academy sessions.

The second hallmark of the program is an emphasis on character. In the sessions, interaction with selected facilitators and peer participants can benefit participants when they:

1. review their professional priorities and leadership practices,
2. commit to a path of character development and
3. acquire skills that lead to highly-effective leadership.

The mental and moral qualities within positive character should be the standard for ALDOT leadership. Character needs to be the goal of current and future leaders within the ALDOT. There are modules devoted to developing character, having a positive influence, initiating positive change, developing employees and mentoring potential in their Bureau or Region.

Approach to Module Presentation

The recommended approach in the Leadership Academy is quite different from that of other leadership programs.

The Academy participants receive the course materials prior to the session and are expected to read and study the selected content. In other words, they are asked to come prepared to participate in an open dialog of discussion, respond to probing questions from the facilitators, share experiences and lessons learned.

The facilitator does not necessarily "teach" in the traditional sense. His or her primary role is to provide an overview of a key leadership topic within the module and to engage (ideally to "light an internal fire under") participants so that they "teach" themselves as a result. As mentioned previously, these interactions between fellow participants and the facilitator will result in a unique learning experience. The facilitator must be genuinely interested in the well-being of each participant and must constantly focus on awaking a desire in each participant to commit to new goals for a better path that shapes character and acquires leadership skills necessary to move the ALDOT forward. It is not recommended that facilitators use all the allocated time in presenting the PowerPoint. It is recommended for the facilitator to prepare ahead of time and introduce questions or use discussion points already in the PowerPoint to evoke discussion and introspective thinking among the participants.

Suggestions for Facilitation Methods

Each program module has a clear purpose and a set of specific learning objectives. This ensures that each session, regardless of the facilitator, covers the key points of the materials and moves the participants along the path to exceptional leadership.

There is no specific method to present a module. Facilitators are encouraged to be flexible and to present each module in the way they are most comfortable. Remember that mastery of the written content is not as important as understanding the overall concepts in the module. The facilitator will need to use questions, inspirational stories, and/or personal examples to lead participants into a deeper understanding of the material. In most cases, this discussion leads them to start thinking about their own lives (typically hectic due to work overload, job responsibilities, uncertainty about their future, and/or possible guilt regarding the lack of time for their personal interests, recreational and spiritual lives). The Leadership Academy offers them hope, because it delivers a better way to lead and a better way to live.

Sessions

The two Sessions are designed to be interactive and probing. Several types of learning styles were considered in the development. The Leadership Academy was prepared -- planned and organized, and should be conducted and assessed based on these intentions.

Prior Reading

As previously outlined, each module covers a leadership topic. The written materials for a module are deliberately brief. They provide an overview of the topic and key points, often in bulleted lists. The idea is for the facilitator and participants to explore the topic and probe how the topic applies to their lives. In effect, each module can be considered as a "starter set" of leadership ideas on a given topic. After a workshop, participants are asked to commit to a better lifestyle involving character development, and to embrace acquiring additional leadership skills as part of their lifestyles.

Presentation

The PowerPoint has built in opportunities to engage participants in discussions and exercise. Facilitators are encouraged to take advantage of these resources to ask probing questions of participants to stimulate the learning environment.

Facilitator Guide

One of the important tasks in preparing for any training is to recruit qualified trainers or facilitators. What do we mean by qualified? Effective programs choose excellent speakers and presenters who are skilled in training and have a rich experience in training. The uniqueness of the Academy is that qualified facilitators means "respected and experienced" ALDOT "leaders". This Facilitator Guide document was developed to assist in recruiting and preparing facilitators. It offers suggestions to facilitators about conducting the modules in ways that engage and motivate participants and challenges participants to evaluate their lives and choose a rich path to excellent leadership.

Part 2: General Approach for All Modules

Preparing for the Session

Read the Leadership Academy Workbook. Facilitators must study the module that is being facilitated and the PowerPoint slides which will be used in the presentation. Facilitators should review the Handouts document for the module so they will be aware of the writing participants will be doing while the facilitator is speaking. It is wise to look for other sources of information which will assist in engaging participants and expand the discussions during the module. For example, the written materials for the modules often include lists of references that you might obtain. It is also expedient to identify examples, brief case studies, quotes or even jokes that might be used to connect with and motivate the audience. If a facilitator was unable to attend Briefing for Facilitators, there is a recorded copy of the briefing that should be watched. It contains additional information not covered in this Guide.

General Approach for Facilitating a Session

As your session begins, review the objectives (on the second slide) with participants. Indicate that at the end of the session participants will be asked to evaluate the session and compete a personal growth plan with goals for their future leadership.

Explain to participants that this will be an interactive session and encourage them to ask questions, answer discussion questions, engage in activities and discuss examples of situations related to the module topic. A good way to start this is through a series of questions (usually contained on the first few slides) that relate to the module. Facilitators should use a flipchart chart or white board to record participant responses.

The facilitator notes (contained in the PowerPoint slide below the slide itself) in the presentations do not have to be followed verbatim. You do not need to memorize the notes, when available. You are welcome to use them and follow their suggestions, but use your own judgement about how to facilitate the actual content of the slide. If you are an experienced leader, it might be sufficient for you to just get a feeling for the message you want participants to remember and just start talking to them, so that they can interact with you and with the slides. If you can motivate them to desire better leadership skills and commit to get started, you will have been successful.

During the session, facilitators need to engage participants through examples or real stories of ALDOT.   This will help participants realize their leadership potential and skills. This type of encouragement will aid in increasing their job satisfaction. At the same time, they will be enhancing our Department by improving the leadership skills of future transportation professionals.

As the session progresses, encourage participants to think about their own careers, especially their current situation. Most of them will be overloaded and/or tired. Part of the facilitator's job is to persuade participants they can learn and change -- they can reach a healthier, more enjoyable lifestyle at work by committing to positive character and the acquisition of leadership skill sets.

As stated above, before beginning the detailed preparation for your module, it helps to understand the big picture – how the modules fit together and how the key learning objectives for each module interact with other modules. In fact, each PowerPoint starts with a built in "transition slide" so facilitators can casually integrate the prior module to the module they are conducting.

Part 3- Overview of Modules

Module 1- History of ALDOT

Purpose	Suggestions for Participant Engagement
Understanding where you have been is key to knowing where to go next. This module explores changes which have been a hallmark of ALDOT from the beginning.	• Ask about the benefits they have seen from the recent changes to ALDOT. • Give an example of the benefits of regions. Then ask their opinions • Begin by asking what they know about the ALDOT's history.

Module 2- Leadership Overview

Purpose	Suggestions for Participant Engagement
Motivate participants to change their mindset about leadership, enhance their positive view on the benefits of leadership, and plot career goals for becoming an effective leader.	• Start with a compelling leadership story. • Ask why they were chosen to participate in the workshop. • Ask them to identify an admired leader whom they personally followed or desired to be like and reasons. • Ask them to identify traits of a "perfect" leader.

Module 3- Supervisory Transition

Purpose	Suggestions for Participant Engagement
Gain insights into a supervisors' typical role, the differences with being a leader as a supervisor, and review foundational behaviors of a good supervisor.	• Ask them to engage in the self-assessment of supervisory strengths and weaknesses as stated in the PowerPoint. • Ask them what they perceive their biggest struggles to be in transitioning to a supervisor and later choosing to be a leader – more than "just" a supervisor.

Module 4- Character and Ethics	
Purpose	**Suggestions for Participant Engagement**
Understand that demonstrating a strong positive character is crucial to effective leadership. Leaders with a reputation of being fair, just, and ethical attract followers while those known for lesser character may turn away potential team members.	• Discuss the positive and negative impacts the character of a leader can have on a team. • Discuss how the perception of a leader's character is just as important as actual character when it comes to leadership.
Module 5- Effective Communication	
Purpose	**Suggestions for Participant Engagement**
Demonstrates that effective communication skills are required at both the personal and organizational levels. From advancing one's career to leading significant change in a large organization, effective communication makes it happen.	• Discuss the difference between a leader and a manager in how they communicate. • Discuss why effective communication is important for leadership. • Have them identify the qualities of good interpersonal skills.
Module 6- Characteristics of Effective Communication	
Purpose	**Suggestions for Participant Engagement**
Understand components of communication and recognize what constitutes dynamic communication.	• Share ways to build trust to communicate effectively. • Discuss why effective communication is important for leadership. • Ask them what areas they believe are their weaknesses or areas in which they need development and why.

Module 7- Professional Written Communication	
Purpose	**Suggestions for Participant Engagement**
Understand the differences between written communication and group oral communication. Understand the importance and permanence of written documents. Provide techniques for writing improvement.	• Discussion based on Leadership Moment videos. • Interactive questions about ALDOT's training in professional business writing.
Module 8- Media Communications	
Purpose	**Suggestions for Participant Engagement**
Understand how to, and more importantly when to, coherently and effectively interact with reporters, journalists, and other members of the media. Learn the steps involved in handling the communication aspects of crisis situations.	• Begin with a specific ALDOT example in which you were involved to illustrate media communication. • Begin with a story you know about which involved ALDOT and the media. • Have the participants walk the example provided in the PowerPoint regarding a crisis communication scenario.
Module 9- Facilitation and Presentation Skills	
Purpose	**Suggestions for Participant Engagement**
To recognize the power and potential for influence through verbal communication. To learn practices that enhance meeting effectiveness. To understand what makes a presentation truly effective.	• Ask what steps will the participants take to have more effective meetings. • Have participants discuss their experiences with giving presentations.

Module 10- Strategic Planning and Vision

Purpose	Suggestions for Participant Engagement
Understand the importance of strategic planning and the vision and how to communicate vision daily. Learn how to establish a clear destination for their organization or group, which is supported by the employees.	• Share memorable visions of business they know such as Disney, Hallmark, Papa John Pizza, etc. • Identify and discuss the traits of leaders with visons.

Module 11- Stakeholder Identification and Engagement

Purpose	Suggestions for Participant Engagement
Understand methods to identify key stakeholders, the development of relationships with them, methods to inform them, and key steps to effective stakeholder engagement.	• Create an exercise for engaging multiple stakeholders. • Discuss and get feedback regarding the latest techniques in stakeholder engagement.

Module 12- Positive Change Management

Purpose	Suggestions for Participant Engagement
Understand the benefits of seeking ongoing change and having motivated employees who are committed to the change or gain buy-in.	• Share stories of leaders who have changed the culture of ALDOT. Discuss the challenges of striving to create a positive change. • Discuss the challenges of gaining employee buy-in to a major change.

Module 13- Employee Personality

Purpose

Understand personality typing and how knowing an employee's personality can help a leader guide, coach and mentor the employee to greatness. Learn various personality typing assessments. Identify how to build a team while celebrating the differences in personalities.

Suggestions for Participant Engagement

- When getting to the DISC assessment, discuss the difference in D, I, S, and C by dividing the class out into groups accordingly.

Module 14- Employee Development

Purpose

Understand what it means to develop employees to great performance. This should not be confused with Module 16 on mentoring.

Suggestions for Participant Engagement

- Share a story of how a leader helped develop you through effective coaching and guidance.
- Share ideas as to how to make time to develop employees while on the job within their responsibilities.

Module 15- Positive Influence

Purpose

Understand the "influence" of leaders and methods to have the maximum influence. Identify ways to create buy-in from employees and how to gain the followship of employees.

Suggestions for Participant Engagement

- Tell a story about someone you chose to follow because of the positive influence.
- Ask participants to share stories or experiences about someone with influence.

Module 16- Employee Mentoring	
Purpose Define mentoring and the short term and long term benefits of a deliberate mentoring program. Understand how to create a mentoring program in their work place even if there is not an official mentoring program. Do not confuse this module with Module 14.	**Suggestions for Participant Engagement** • Ask if anyone has had a mentor in a past job or with ALDOT whether formally or informally. • Discuss different opportunities to mentor at ALDOT. • Discuss specific steps to create a mentoring program.

Module 17- Evaluating Leadership Effectiveness	
Purpose Understand the importance of 360-degree leadership effectiveness evaluations and how they work. Identify ways to perform leader evaluations and identify potential gaps in their performance. Learn how to develop an action plan for their own development based on the data and results.	**Suggestions for Participant Engagement** • Have participants self-assess their leadership effectiveness per module title on a 1 to 5 scale. • Pair off accountability partners and develop mutual recommendations for leadership growth.

Closing

The Leadership Academy is meant to be an intensive program to develop future leaders at the ALDOT. However, the productive program is also intended to:
- be a time where participants meet and get to know peers from around the state.
- be an opportunity to find influential leaders from the many and diverse facilitators.
- be a relaxing, fun and retreat type event for participants.

Once curriculum was developed, facilitators are the key to the Academy. How well they prepare, present, facilitate, and engage participants will determine the success of the ALDOT Leadership Academy.

The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains.
The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires.
William Arthur Ward